



"HITCHING POST HILL — ASH HILL,"
Prince George's County, Maryland
Built in 1840.
A National Register of Historic Places property of the United States Department of Interior Records.

Photo taken September, 1982.

Historic Hitching Post Hill — Ash Hill: General Beale and its Other Owners

By: T. Raymond Burch
Grace F. Burch
Jane A. Burch
(former owners)

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HITCHING POST HILL — ASH HILL
1835 to 1983
Prince Georges County, Maryland

First Edition — 1965
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By: T. Raymond Burch
Grace F. Burch
Jane A. Burch
(owners — 1947 to 1983)

A HISTORIC MARYLAND ESTATE

Reprinted from the Prince Georges Post

Hitching Post Hill — or Ash Hill, as it was once known — is a more than a century-old estate located in Prince Georges County, Maryland, less than ten miles from the White House. It is a weary traveler's realization of a dream of a spacious, comfortable and quiet home by the side of the road.

In 1840 Robert Thomas Clark, a wealthy native of Sheffield, England, built the imposing red brick mansion high on a wooded ridge, overlooking miles of green hills and valleys by day and the lights of Washington by night. Clark had come to Washington with two friends to enter business. The hot and muggy climate of the Capital City discouraged him from residing in it, however, so he took to the country to find a more pleasant atmosphere. A mile west of the present site of the University of Maryland, he came upon a 1,000-acre plantation with a flat hilltop building site which pleased him so well that he purchased the place immediately. There, on a green and wooded plateau, several hundred feet above Washington, he began construction of his mansion house.

Clark spared no costs. When the house was finished, it was, and has remained, one of the show places of Maryland. The most capable architects and builders obtainable were engaged to build the mansion, and they built for both beauty and endurance. Today, the sixteen-inch solid brick walls are as sturdy as they were when first laid, more than forty years before the completion of the Washington Monument. The floors, constructed from the heart of black pine, are as solid as ever. In each of the twelve original living rooms there remains a working fireplace. In recent years the house has been thoroughly modernized through the installation of oil heat, electricity, city water, and numerous bathrooms, but all of the old lines of the mansion have been scrupulously retained.

Two features of the estate which initially attract visitors are the scores of huge trees of many varieties around the house and the massive white pillared porch on three sides of the structure.

Of the more than two hundred trees on the grounds, which now consist solely of the original hill-top site of four acres, a giant holly stands out supreme. Nobody knows how old this tree is, but University of Maryland tree experts have estimated its age at 250 years. It is 45 feet high, has a trunk circumference of nearly seven feet, and is said to be the second largest holly tree in Maryland. It does not produce berries, but many other holly trees on the place do. Additionally, surrounding the mansion are numerous locust, maple, horse chestnut, oak, spruce, hemlock, black walnut, cottonwood, weeping willow, gum and persimmon trees. Several of the shade trees were planted before the Civil War.

The huge porch is especially inviting to visitors on summer evenings. With a total length of 120 feet, a twelve-foot width, studded with enormous white pillars and shaded well by giant trees, it has a strong appeal to both romantically inclined youths bent on finding the most attractive views of the mellow Maryland moon and older folk who love to "just sit" quietly and enjoy the gentle evening breezes. Only the front of the present porch was a part of the original mansion. It was extended on both sides by a retired Rear Admiral of the United States Navy, Chauncey Thomas, who bought the estate in

the late 1890's and added a hundred or more feet of "deck space" on which to exercise.

PRESIDENTS OFTEN VISITED HITCHING POST

The Hill is rich in historic associations. Particularly during the thirty years following the Civil War through the two Cleveland administrations, it was a gathering place for noted politicians and soldiers. At least two Presidents - Grant and Cleveland - were entertained frequently by the then owner, General Edward R. Beale. President Lincoln is said to have visited the place on at least one occasion, but this is unconfirmed.

General Beale was a glamorous character who has been slighted by most historians. He also owned the Decatur House on Lafayette Square in Washington. He was a straight-shooting, hard-fighting, robust-swearing maverick who walked with kings and commoners, shaved with saddle soap, and always put on a good show. Among his close friends were General Fremont, President Lincoln, General Grant, Jefferson Davis, and "Buffalo Bill" Cody. He and Grant were especially close friends. While Grant was in the White House and for years thereafter, he made Hitching Post Hill, then called Ash Hill, his second home. In fact, as soon as his day's work was finished at the White House, Grant would jump into his buggy and set off briskly behind a team of fast-stepping trotters to Beale's farm for an evening unmarred by discussions of weighty problems of the state. Once Grant drove so fast to reach the farm that he was arrested and fined in Hyattsville for exceeding the speed limit. Grant grinned and paid, holding that a President should not be above obeying the law.

Horses were a great passion of both Beale and Grant, and Beale's substantial wealth permitted him to enjoy such animals to the utmost. They first became aware of their mutual interest when they fought together during the Mexican War. Later, Beale, acting as a Government agent in the Southwest and Far West, spent much time in the saddle. It was there, under the direction of Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War for the United States, that Beale attempted to establish a freight-carrying service with camels across the great American desert. The scheme failed, but at the turn of the century some of Beale's homeless camels were still browsing among the Jericho trees of Arizona in search of a square meal with a dash of water on the side.

Beale bought the Maryland estate shortly after the Civil War. He built several huge barns to the north and west of the mansion, constructed three race tracks (one in the field south of the mansion and two along the river below the hill and to the west), bought 300 brood mares and started raising trotters on a large scale. None of the horses ever amounted to much, but Beale, Grant, Buffalo Bill, and others had a grand time discussing the possibilities of raising a champion.

BUFFALO BILL ALSO STAYED THERE

At the end of one of these horse-fests, Beale suggested that Buffalo Bill Cody, whose show was just closing in Washington, settle down for the winter at the estate. Bill, apparently feeling mellow and expansive, agreed not only to become a guest at the Hill himself, but also to bring his entire show troupe with him. He did just that, and the entire Wild West show camped on the grounds of Hitching Post Hill for the fall and winter months.

International fame came to the Hill in 1879 through the presence of two of the world's finest Arabian stallions, Linden and Leopard. They were presented to General Grant by the Sultan of Turkey when Grant was making a round-the-world tour following his retirement from the Presidency. When he bestowed the valuable gifts on Grant, the former President was taken by surprise. He did not have time to get the stallions home, so he cabled General Beale, who, ever generous, replied that the stallions must be accepted and sent to his farm without delay. They were shipped first to New Haven, Connecticut, on an ammunition boat which was making regular trips to Turkey. Landing May 30, 1879, they were shown in triumph at New York, Philadelphia, Dover, Alexandria, Cumberland and finally Washington. Newspapers followed their travels avidly, but as breeding stock, the stallions were failures. Grant and Beale were apparently too busy with other matters to direct their destinies.

Randolph Huntington, of Rochester, New York, a rabid Arabian horse fan, spent a fortune trying to popularize them and their foals. At great cost, he had oil paintings made of the stallions and wrote a book about them which is now a collector's item. Breeders of the then popular Hambletonian stock treated him like a pickpocket for trying to introduce Arabian blood into the veins of American harness mares. What finally became of the stallions, a diligent search of Congressional Library records fails to reveal. They were last reported at Hitching Post Hill in 1885, when their loyal historian, Huntington, noted that one of them was getting a little gray.

GRANT LOVED THE PLACE

Grant often expressed great love for Hitching Post Hill. A letter he wrote from Inverness, Scotland, on September 9, 1877, told of his longing for the old place. "I will feel more at home back in Washington than any place else," he wrote, "and no place would I rather be than visiting your farm with you."

After Rear Admiral Thomas sold the estate in the late 1890's, it had a succession of owners. Once it was vacant for more than a year, and vandals broke window lights, stole some removable fixtures, and committed other depredations. When, eventually, it came into the loving hands of the Clay family - John W. and Lucy E.W. - rapid and permanent improvements were made. Despite the abuse to which the house had been subjected, it still was solid as the Rock of Gibraltar and readily yielded to rehabilitation. The Clays renamed the place "Ashland" after the ancestral home of their kinsman, Henry Clay of Kentucky.

In 1936, the Clays sold the estate to Labert and Mae St. Clair of New York, who completed the modernization work already begun. They added a stable, a three-car garage and driveways. The old slave house, which had stood for more than a century, was torn down. After the wooden superstructure had been wrecked, a basement with brick walls three feet thick was unearthed. The brick was removed and used in the construction of a new building on the property. The entire farm was also fenced with locust posts and oak boards and whitewashed, and this style of fencing was later adopted by the owners of all the surrounding properties.

Lively times followed the arrival of the St. Clairs at the Hill. As former Washingtonians, they enjoyed a wide set of acquaintances in newspaper and political circles. The St. Clair daughters, Jean, who was active in the Red Cross, and Tommie, in the World War II WAVES, were both also involved in University of Maryland affairs; and so

the Hill became a gathering place for crowds of all ages. Especially at such large parties could one appreciate how wisely and comfortably Robert Clark had built the house in 1840. On various occasions as many as several hundred persons were entertained without visible signs of crowding.

IT'S COOL AND QUIET

Washington and its environs have changed much since the fatigued Robert Clark stopped to rest and found the land of his dreams on the Maryland hilltop 150 years ago, but Hitching Post Hill itself has changed little. The estate remains at the end of a quiet road, and there, back of the tall trees, still is found the peace and quiet that Clark and many others have enjoyed so much. As one sits on the broad porch, day or night, and hears no sound save the occasional droning of a passing plane, it is difficult to realize that less than two miles away begins the District of Columbia with its dense crowds of people on streets and sidewalks, in restaurants and hotels. Hitching Post Hill is truly a great place to get away from it all.

NATIVE MARYLANDER BUYS ESTATE AFTER WORLD WAR II

In 1947 Mr. and Mrs. T. Raymond Burch bought Hitching Post Hill. They redecorated the interior completely with scenic and imported wallpaper, refinished the woodwork and pine floors, and added redwood paneling and tile to the ground floor. On the property the Burchs also added an extensive rose garden, a fruit orchard, various flower beds, and a patio with a large outdoor fireplace. Mr. Burch, a life-long resident of Prince Georges County, was a former Berywn Postmaster, a member of the Maryland state legislature, a realtor, and historian. He and Mrs. Burch have entertained as many as five hundred people on their New Year's Day "Open House." They have welcomed political clubs for teas which the Governor of Maryland and state and county officials have attended. The grounds of Hitching Post Hill have also been open to church picnics.

Mr. and Mrs. Burch have eight children and twenty-six grandchildren, and there are continual comings-and-goings on the Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Burch and their daughter, Jane, have researched the records of the estate and in their library have official copies, from the deeds of sale of the estate. The first deed is dated 1835 when the Calverts sold the land to Robert Clark, the second deed is dated 1875 when Clark sold the estate to General Beale, and the third deed is dated 1895 when Admiral Thomas bought the property. The Burchs also have copies of the oil paintings of the two Arabian horses, Linden and Leopard. The original oil paintings hang at Decatur House in Washington, along with many letters of correspondence between General Beale and General Grant. General Beale also owned the Decatur House at the same time that he owned Hitching Post Hill or Ash Hill. He and General Grant would leave Washington whenever the opportunity arose and ride out to Beale's country home, Hitching Post Hill. Linden and Leopard, Grant's Arabian stallions, were kept there along with hundreds of Beale's horses. In Marie Beale's book, "Decatur House and its Inhabitants," she writes of General Beale's country place. The history of Hitching Post Hill or Ash Hill is in the archives of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

Also in the library of Hitching Post Hill is a copy of the letter written by General Grant

to General Beale from Inverness, Scotland, on September 9, 1877.

Jane A. Burch

CERTIFIED COPY FROM THE UPPER MARLBORO COURT HOUSE OF CONVEYANCE OF HITCHING POST HILL PROPERTY FROM GEORGE CALVERT AND CHARLES B. CALVER, ET. AL. TO ROBERT CLARK, DATE 23RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER 1836. DEED OF GOODWIN G. WILLIAMS, TRUSTEE TO ROBERT CLARK, COPY LIBEP. FS1, FOLIO93.

This Indenture, made this seventh day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one between Goodwin G. Williams of Baltimore County In the State of Maryland, Trustee as hereinafter mentioned, of the first part; and Robert Clark of Prince Georges County in the State of Maryland aforesaid, of the second part:

Whereas, by a Deed of Trust duly executed and delivered by Elizabeth Davis dated on the first day of December in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five to a certain George Calvert In Trust for certain purposes, therein contained, transferring to said George Calvert all the real estate In Montgomery County and elsewhere in the State of Maryland, whereas a certain Thomas Cramphin was seized in his own rightor to use at the date of the above recited instrument of writing or at the date of the last of them, as by said deeds of trust recorded among the land records of Montgomery County will more fully appear by reference thereunto being had.

And whereas in virtue of the powers vested in said George Calvert by said Deed of Trust, he, the said George Calvert did, on or about the twenty-third day of September eighteen hundred and thirty six sell and dispose of at a public sale to the said Robert Clark, at and for the sum or price of twenty-one dollars per acre, a piece or parcel of land situated or lying in Prince Georges County aforesaid, containing four hundred and twenty-seven acres and one half of an acre of land, making the full price or sum to be paid by the said Robert Clark to the said George Calvert, trustee as aforesaid, eight thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven dollars and fifty cents.

W. WAVERLY WEBB, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY
UPPER MARLBORO, MD.

CERTIFIED COPY OF DEED FROM THE UPPER MONTCLAIR COURT HOUSE STATING THAT ROBERT CLARK SOLD HITCHING POST HILL TO GENERAL BEALE ON APRIL 27, 1875.

And the said Robert Clark warrants and defends the said described land unto the said Edward F. Beale against all claims, demands and encumbrances whatsoever. And the said Robert Clark covenants that he has done no matter, act or thing to encumber the said lands and that he and his said wife will execute such further assurances as may be required.

Witness our hands and seals..

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of	Robert Clark	(SEAL)
	Alethea Clark	(SEAL)

Jos. T.K. Plant, District of Columbia, County of Washington, SS:

I hereby certify that on this 17th day of April, 1875, before me, Jos. T.K. Plant, a Commissioner of Deeds of the State of Maryland in and for the District of Columbia, personally appeared in the City of Washington, Robert Clark and Alethea Clark, his wife, and did each and severally acknowledge the foregoing deed to be their act. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my official seal, State of Maryland, Prince Georges County, To Wit:-

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of Deed taken from LIBER HB 10 at FOLIO 144, one of the Land Records of the County aforementioned. In Testimony, I

hereto set my hand and official Seal of the Circuit Court, this twenty-third day of August, 1961.

W. WAVERLY WEBB

COPY FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS OF AN ORIGINAL LETTER WRITTEN BY PRESIDENT U.S. GRANT TO GENERAL E.F. BEALE ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1877.

(In this letter Grant writes that he feels more at home visiting Beale's farm than any place else.)

MacDonald's Station Hotel
Inverness

September 9, 1877

My Dear Beale,

I was delighted day before yesterday while visiting this very northermost part of Scotland by receiving your very acceptable favour of the 15th of August. We have had a most delightful visit both in England and Scotland, and on the Continent. We will remain on this Island until about the 20th of October when we will go to Paris to remain sometime. If the money holds out - it depends very much on Consolidated Silver Mining stock holding out - I will be able to stay about two years very pleasantly.

It has been very gratifying to me - though very irksome to one so little inclined to public speaking - to see our country so respected as it is abroad and as to the people of all classes; they show it on all occasions. The demonstrations on all the lines of railroads, when the trains stop, are very much like they were after the War of the Rebellion, in the Northern States, when any of the Army officers who were in high favor, were traveling. But the newspapers! Have you enough with this subject without my inflicting anything further?

Traveling as I have, I have not been very well able to keep up with affairs at home. Important matters like the last railroad strike are fully reported and duly exaggerated, of course - but little details I do not see as I would if receiving our own papers regularly. The progress of Civil Service Reform - very flexible reform, is humbug, that justifies whatever a few dissatisfied politicians want - comes by installments. There are two humbugs which Mr. Hayes will find out - for I believe he is an honestly sincere man, and patriot - one is Civil Service Reform, the other Reformers. This is my judgment. Let us see.

Soon after my arrival in England, I had the pleasure of driving Kellogg. He came over in fine condition and is as good as ever. I hope Rockey may prove as good and that Mrs. Beale or yourself will find enjoyment in using him. I left word before my departure that if Blossom is not in foal, you could use her on the turf or otherwise - as you choose. I will feel more at home back in Washington than anywhere else, and no place more than in visiting your farm with you. I also thank you and Mrs. Beale - Mrs. Grant joins me in this - for your kind invitation to your house. If we should conclude to remain there, we will, of course, endeavor to have a house of our own. But we thank you all the same.

With kindest regards of Mrs. Grant and myself to Mrs. Beale and all your family. I am, sincerely and truly,

Your obedient servant,
U.S. Grant

Gen. E.F. Beale

Of Historical Interest
HITCHING POST HILL

*Reprinted from The News Leader Newspaper,
Laurel, Maryland*

Not all of Prince George's storied mansions were built in the dim 1600's and 1700's.

True, chroniclers have paid these more heed because they possessed interest for their great age alone, irrespective of historical associations. Now and again, however, one appears which is so richly endowed that it should be bracketed with the more ancient structures even though it might lack their age by a century or more. Hyattsville has such a home on its western perimeter; it was built in the fairly modest year 1840, but if it lacks the great age of a Mt. Airy or a Mullikin's Delight, it need take place to none in the matter of the illustrious who have known it intimately down through the years.

Hitching Post Hill was built by an Englishman, Robert Clark, who had come to the Washington area from his native Sheffield in the first half of the 19th century. Whether he prospered in his business ventures seems not known or important now. Of interest is the fact that he took a dim view of the humid pre-Civil war climate of Washington. Perhaps its limited extent strung out along Timber Creek was actually more oppressive than anyone knows today, but Clark wasted no time in seeking a more salubrious climate.

He found it on a plateau west of today's University of Maryland and promptly acquired 999 acres from the Charles B. Calvert family. Here he built a home, and he built it in a grand manner. Hitching Post Hill has brick walls sixteen inches through, and each of a dozen rooms contains a usable fireplace. Its floors are the original heart pine that Clark specified and while modernization has not passed it by, it has never been at the expense of its original external appearance.

A succession of owners of means have been as scrupulous in their insistence that the 1840 atmosphere be rigidly preserved. One among them, Rear Admiral Chauncey Thomas, USN, Ret, continued an original porch across the front to its present-day 120-foot length, but none would quarrel with its 12-foot deep styling. The Thomas addition was carried out in the late 1890's, so few on the local scene today would recall its earlier appearance.

At least two presidents knew well the hospitality of Hitching Post Hill: Grant and Cleveland, and traditionally, Lincoln, too, although the visit of the latter is unsubstantiated. Grant, though, was an intimate of General Edward F. Beale, who acquired the estate after the Civil War, and much correspondence between the two mentions Grant's fondness for his friend and his home. Beale was also an intimate of Jefferson Davis, General Fremont and, curiously, Buffalo Bill. An article in a local paper 30 years ago tells of Buffalo Bill and his whole Wild West troupe wintering here late in the century. Beale's great wealth and love of horses had much to do with his unusual range of friends. The General raised hundreds on his immense farm, and in 1879, as a favor to the ex-President, received a pair of superb Arabian stallions presented to Grant by the Sultan of Turkey.

Early in this century, Hitching Post Hill came into the possession of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Clay of Virginia, who renamed the property Ashland for the ancestral home of their kinsman, Henry Clay of Kentucky. It would be interesting to know whether the Clays ever learned that scarcely two miles east of the Maryland home, a silver plate on a door in another Maryland mansion recounts that here Henry Clay evolved his famous Missouri Compromise.

In 1936, Hitching Post Hill was sold by the Clays to Mr. and Mrs. Labert St. Clair of New York, but earlier of Washington. In their hands, it continued as something of a social center, particularly with the press and politically-connected. For the past thirty years it has been owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. T. Raymond Burch. Mr. Burch

was well known in the county real estate circles. The tradition of lavish entertaining socially has continued, and virtually all of Maryland's governors in this generation have known the hospitality of the old place.

Estates of 999 acres, a stone's throw from the nation's capital, are no longer the accustomed thing. Hitching Post Hill has lost its once extensive area and today it is a four-acre place, a property perhaps more remarkable in this day and age than in early days when Robert Clark knew its total extent. As its size shrank, however, its suburban charm must have grown proportionately. Here today are immense old trees of a dozen or more species, most planted before the Civil War. At least one among them must have been huge when Clark selected his building site — a gigantic holly estimated by University of Maryland forestry experts to be almost 300 years old. The state's prize specimen is still at St. Mary's City, with an 11-foot trunk circumference. Belair once had a matched pair, boasting a 9½-foot dimension, but these are gone now, so perhaps Hitching Post Hill now rates second place. This is a lordly thing in any event.

And Hitching Post Hill verges on being a lordly thing itself, so it is rather fitting and proper that the two stand here together, complementing the Maryland countryside.

James C. Wilfong, Jr.

A REVIEW OF THE PAST ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AT HITCHING POST HILL, ITS INHABITANTS AND EVENTS

In 1835 the Calvert family owned the Hitching Post Hill land, as well as the University of Maryland land and Rossborough Inn. In 1835 George Calvert sold one thousand acres of land to Robert Clark. This was the beginning of Hitching Post Hill or Ash Hill, as it was then called. Robert Clark finished building his mansion house in 1840. And it still stands today along with the Rossborough Inn and the Calvert mansion, the three landmarks within two miles of each other, a rarity today, for there are just a few left in Prince Georges County.

The Hitching Post Hill mansion house was solidly built and squarely built of brick with four chimneys atop the house and a crow's nest in the center of the top roof. The house was copied after an English country or manor house. The old Spring House still stands closely by the main house, with its gray gabled slate roof and old bricks; in the cupola on top is carved the name of the builder and the year 1840.

Mr. Clark had a prosperous plantation here, and both Union and Confederate soldiers marched by for refreshments and the farm food. In those days the kitchens were on the ground floor and the servants brought the food from the farm and spring house to the ground floor. In 1875 Robert Clark decided to sell his plantation and General Beale bought it during that year.

General Beale was a daring, lively man who had blazed various trails in the West. He was the first man to open a horse and wagon route through Arizona and the Far West. He also brought back the first gold dust from California to show to the U.S. Congress in Washington. For gallant conduct during the Mexican War, his fellow officers presented to him a sword of honor and epaulettes.

During the years that Beale lived at Hitching Post Hill, the estate was full of people and liveliness at all times. Beale loved people from all walks of life, from U.S. presidents to circus performers. Hundreds of horses were kept here and the entire estate was full of activity. President Grant was a regular weekend visitor and used the upstairs southeast bedroom. General Beale also owned Decatur House on Lafayette Square across from the White House, which still stands today. For relaxation, President Grant and General Beale would drive their horses out from Decatur House and the White House to Beale's farm, Hitching Post Hill or Ash Hill. Beale finally sold the estate to a Col. Haywood and a Col. Ainsworth, as Beale owned a large ranch in California near the present city of Bakersfield, California. General Beale died at Decatur House where today the public may see many of his possessions. His daughter-in-law, Marie Beale, bequeathed Decatur House to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

After Col. Haywood and Col. Ainsworth acquired the property, they sold six hundred acres to the Davis Brothers, a real estate firm in Washington. Then Admiral Chauncey Thomas bought 20 acres and the house in 1895. He added the east and west porches to with the front porch. In 1907 Mr. Hunter Doll bought the property. He married Senator Davis' widow. After that, the house was vacant for a while.

Then the Clay family bought the historic house, and they did much to restore and preserve it. They are descendants of the illustrious Henry Clay family of Kentucky. Henry Clay, coincidentally, was a regular visitor to the Calvert Mansion in 1850. The Clays sold the place to Mr. Labert St. Clair in 1936. He was a World War II appointee of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and he and Mrs. St. Clair entertained widely at the

Hill. Many of their friends were political leaders and newspaper writers.

In 1947 Mr. and Mrs. T. Raymond Burch purchased the historic property. Mr. Burch is a native of the town and helped to incorporate it, served in the Maryland state legislature, and recently wrote a history of the town of College Park and its environs. It is appropriate that a native Marylander is maintaining and preserving the old mansion house. The Burchs have researched the records of the historic property and in their library have deeds of sale from the Marlboro Court House dating back to 1835 and letters and pictures from the Library of Congress about General Beale and President Grant.

Department of Agriculture and National Arboretum officials have recently visited the Hill and have stated that the male holly tree is the second oldest in Maryland. They and University of Maryland forestry experts have recently taken pictures of the tree. Also, they pointed out that the black walnut, cottonwood and horse chestnut trees are extremely rare and old. Directly to the north and parallel to the center of the house is a large ash tree which is fitting, as Ash Hill was the original name of the house.

Some random observations of the joys of living at the Hill follow: the airiness of the high-ceilinged rooms, the many, many sunny windows with their floor-to-ceiling heights, the same pine floors where many people walked over a century ago, the antique white marble fireplaces, the old woodwork throughout the interior, children noisily climbing to the crow's nest to see the mile-wide view, brides tossing their bouquets down the long staircase to the front hall, the coolness of the English ground floor in summer, the strong granite exterior window sills, the white collanaded porch in the moonlight, sun shining on mellow old brick walls of the house, the semi-circular azalea-lined front driveway, the lacy dogwood trees in spring, the green bowers of cool giant trees in summer, the gold and red of maple and sassafras trees in fall, the holly trees, heavily-laden with red berries in winter, English ivy climbing to the top of the north wall, seeing the entire horizon as the sun sets, a walk to the edge of the hill for a fresh breeze even on the hottest summer day, parties with lighted trees, porches and patio, and a glowing house with dancing and chatter, Christmas time with the mansion lighted from the evergreens on the lawn to the porches, to the house and up to the crow's nest, a lighted hill of peace and goodwill, guests enjoying the gracious and spacious house, the dewy, dreamy look of the old flower gardens and the heavenly leafy haven of the towering trees.

Now we can think long thoughts back to Robert Clark's plantation here in 1840, the chant of the field hands working in the sun, the chatter of the maids going to and fro from the Spring House to kitchens to marching feet of first Union and then Confederate soldiers as they stopped to refresh themselves with Mr. Clark's bountiful farm foods. Then in 1875 General Beale entertained his many friends from all walks of life, from U.S. presidents to circus performers. What true adventures must have been retold here between the daring conqueror of the West and the leader of the Civil War! The laughter and talk, and the sounds of hundreds of horses must have resounded. In the time of the Clay family occupancy, they industriously set about planning to restore the old mansion and this they did, and because of their preservation, the old mansion is still strong today. Mr. Labert St. Clair entertained here during World War II. The mansion was crowded with political leaders again. All was excitement and a babble of voices in those hectic days as plans and events were discussed. Finally, Mr. and Mrs. Burch still kept the tradition of social entertaining with political gatherings, which the

Governor of Maryland and leading state and county officials attend.

Now we see that all of these men who owned Hitching Post Hill have been men who worked for their country, and they were helped by charming and gracious wives. Among them were Alethea Clark, Mrs. Edward Beale, Mrs. Lucy Clay, Mrs. Mae St. Clair, and Mrs. Grace Burch. Robert Clark was the plantation owner who worked and loved the land; General Beale, a man of daring deeds, conqueror of the West, and fighter in the Mexican and Indian wars; the Clays who have worked generation after generation for over a hundred years to keep our country and homes strong and secure; Mr. St. Clair who worked diligently for President Roosevelt during World War II; and Mr. Burch, a leader of his town who went on to the Maryland state legislature and has written the history of his native area.

These men and this mansion house are somewhat similar, with solid and strong foundations and characters, towering to lofty heights or ideals with a true spirit of liveliness and hospitality for all people. May Hitching Post Hill continue to tie the good deeds of these men in the past to new generations of men to follow and serve our beloved United States and enjoy the heritage of this historic house on the hill.

Jane A. Burch

A Maryland National Historical Society marker was placed at Hitching Post Hill in 1965. The text of the marker reads - "Hitching Post Hill" or "Ash Hill". George Calvert sold this land to Robert Clark in 1835. Clark built the house in 1840. General Edward F. Beale bought the estate in 1875. Presidents Grant and Cleveland were frequent visitors, also "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Grant's Arabian horses were kept on the land. A National Register of Historic Places plaque was acquired in 1976.

This documented booklet of Hitching Post Hill is on record with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Md., the Prince Georges County Historical Society, Marlboro, Md., the University of Maryland Library, College Park, Md., and the Prince Georges County Regional Library, Adelphi, Md.

Notes about General Edward F. Beale: two outstanding books about General Beale are "Memoirs of My Life" by John Charles Fremont and "Edward Fitzgerald Beale" by Stephen Bonsal; and the California Historical Society and the Decatur House, Washington, D.C. have pictures and historical information about General Beale.

*T. Raymond Burch, Grace F. Burch and Jane A. Burch,
Owners — 1947 to 1983*

ANECDOTES

Robert Clark's great-great-grandson visited Hitching Post Hill in 1979, and he told interesting anecdotes about the Clark family during the Civil War. The Union soldiers inspected the plantation house in the 1860's on numerous occasions to see if there were Confederate soldiers, flags, or spies. Mrs. Clark was perturbed at their frequent visits, and one day she told the Union men that her children had smallpox upstairs, and the Union men did not linger long that day.

Mr. Clark, the plantation owner, used the cupolo or crow's nest on top of the house to oversee the farm and field hands at work. The Clarks used it also as a lookout for approaching visitors.

Many of the later owners enjoyed this high cupolo with its mile-wide view of the countryside.

Jane A. Burch

APPENDIX: Jane A. Burch donated a preservation easement to the Maryland Historical Trust of Annapolis in 1982 ensuring the preservation of the home. This easement will prevent all future owners of "Hitching Post Hill" from selling the two remaining acres of land and from changing the exterior architecture of the home. Miss Burch sold the historic home in 1983. Mr. and Mrs. John Gianetti are the present owners.
1985

APPENDIX

T. Raymond, Grace F., and Jane A. had the Maryland Historical Society marker placed at the front driveway entrance to the home in 1965.

They were the owners of the historic landmark from 1947 to 1983. They acquired a National Register of Historic Places status for the property from the United States Department of Interior in 1975. They obtained a bronze plaque as a National Register place, and it was attached to the brick exterior wall of the home at the front door entrance.

In 1982 Jane A. Burch, owner, obtained a brass plaque reading "1982 - Ash Hill - Hitching Post Hill Exterior Preservation, with Perpetual Easement by owner to the Maryland Historical Trust of Annapolis, in memory of Raymond and Grace Burch, owners 1947 - 1978." This plaque was attached to the brick exterior wall front entrance in 1983.

DOCUMENTS AND ARTICLES

Marlboro Court House - two deeds of conveyance dated 1835 and 1875.

Library of Congress - Grant's letter to Beale in 1877.

William Moore, Editor and author on the Prince George's Post.

James Wilfong, Historian on the Laurel News Leader.

THE LAST PATHFINDING PIONEER

General Edward Fitzgerald Beale has been slighted by most historians, but he has been called "The Last Pathfinder" and "A Pioneer in the Path of Empire" by writers of early western history of the United States.

The Battle of San Pasqual was the bloodiest fight in the war for California. The United States lost three officers and 18 dragoons before Captain Andres Pico's Mexican forces on a dreary December day in 1846. The monument now standing in the peaceful Southern California valley that was the battleground honors the American forces who were under the leadership of General Stephen W. Kearney, Captains Abraham R. Johnston and Benjamin Moore, Kit Carson, and Edward F. Beale, U.S. Navy. These were Army men except for Kit Carson, the legendary scout, and Edward F. Beale. Why was he there?

Edward F. Beale was born on February 4, 1822 at his father's home about a mile north of the White House in Washington, D.C. He grew up surrounded by the stories and memories of his daring maternal grandfather, Thomas Truxton, who received a gold medal from Congress for his capture, while commanding the Constellation, of two French frigates, both his superiors in guns and men. Beale's father received a silver medal from Congress for his services in the victory over a British squadron of superior forces on Lake Champlain on September 11, 1814.

Young "Ned" Beale planned to enter the Navy and by the time he was old enough, Andrew Jackson occupied the White House. Because of his Beale background, he had prescriptive rights to enter the Navy, but in the democratic era of President Jackson, prescriptive rights were frowned upon. According to the Beale family archives, the happy accident of a fist fight gave him the naval appointment he wanted. While returning from school in Georgetown one afternoon, young Ned and a friend of his named Evans argued about President Jackson, and Ned upheld Jackson while the other boy represented the rival John Quincy Adams forces.

The young fighters were rolling on the ground when the shadow of a tall man fell across them. He demanded and was given an explanation of the fight and then he said, "I am Jackson. I never forget the men and boys who are willing to fight for me, but, of course, I do not wish for them to do it all the time. Now, put on your coats."

Later, when Ned and his widowed mother called at the White House to request his naval appointment, the lad spoke up and reminded the President of his fight. Without another word, the Chief Executive wrote the Secretary of the Navy, "Give this boy an immediate warrant." So young Beale was launched on his naval career by Old Hickory himself.

At the age of fifteen, he reported to the Independence, the receiving ship at Philadelphia, which was then serving as the Naval School. He arrived there in February 1837, wearing a very fancy coat. Ned's mother had ordered a seamstress to make a coat along nautical lines and to feature prominently Beale's grandfather Truxton's large gold buttons. These buttons were historical and proved to be of great interest (not historical) to the other young men on board the Independence. Beale successfully defended his grandfather's honor, but to his mother's sorrow, he lost all the buttons in many fights he had with his shipmates.

During his early training, in the period before he was 16, he twice risked drowning to save shipmates, and he made life-long friends at this time despite his tendency to

settle arguments with his fists.

Beale was warranted in 1839 and ordered to the West Indies Squadron where he served one year. Then, he was sent back to the Naval School at Philadelphia and in 1842, at age 20, he graduated and was commissioned Passed-Midshipman with a commendation for his seamanship and his ability to write excellent English in the final tests. His next duty was on board the Porpoise and on October 2, 1845, the tall, brown-eyed, twenty-three year old officer was ordered to the frigate Congress which carried him to California and brought him to San Diego in time to fight in the Battle of San Pasqual.

War with Mexico had just broken out and hostilities had already begun when the Congress arrived in Monterey, California, on July 20. Two weeks earlier California had been annexed to the United States by the Navy. Commodore Robert F. Stockton was in command of the Congress and brought in reinforcements.

The situation in California was unsettled. Kit Carson was making his way overland to Washington, D.C. with the news that California was now under the Stars and Stripes. After Carson's departure, fighting began between the Californians (Mexicans) and the U.S. forces, and Los Angeles had to be evacuated. Commodore Stockton took the retreating U.S. forces on board the Congress and proceeded to San Diego in order to regroup and resupply. It was Stockton's intention to march his troops northward and retake Los Angeles.

When the Congress sailed into San Diego Bay, Stockton raised the Stars and Stripes above the sprawling little pueblo on its shores. Preparations for the northern march were progressing when the startling news arrived that General Stephen W. Kearney and his bedraggled remnant of the Army of the West had arrived at Warner's Hot Springs from Santa Fe, New Mexico. General Kearney requested communications with the Naval forces. Immediately, General Stockton sent Marine Captain Archibald H. Gillespie, Midshipman Beale, Midshipman Duncan and a party of volunteer Bluejackets to meet Kearney and the Army forces.

General Kearney had intercepted Kit Carson on his trip east and Carson told him that all was peaceful. Kearney then returned most of the Army to Santa Fe and marched to California, thinking that the whole state was subdued and under U.S. control. It came as a startling surprise to General Kearney to find himself about 60 miles from his destination, San Diego, with a hostile band of Californians (Mexicans) barring his way.

The Navy forces met with General Kearney and his men, and the Navy men advised Kearney to approach San Diego through El Cajon and Mission Valley, a fairly safe route.

But Kearney decided to meet the Californians head-on, despite the fact that his own men were bone-weary and without sufficient equipment.

Major Emory, one of his officers, later wrote that "it was one of the most tattered and ill-fed detachments of men that ever the U.S. mustered under its colors." One unusual note was that many of Kearney's cavalry made their charge mounted on mules!

No two accounts of the number of men involved are the same, but most accounts say there were 100 Americans against 80 Californians.

Kearney had underestimated the skill of the native Californians as horsemen and the fact that they were desperate and defending their homeland against invasion.

Two hours after the fighting began, 18 Americans lay dead and a number of men, including General Kearney himself, had been severely wounded by California lances.



Beale dressed in Mexican disguise for his ride across Mexico in 1849, bringing first official samples of California gold to Washington, D.C. (Decatur House Collection, Edmund Barrett photo.)



General Beale at the Battle of San Pasqual.

which were bedecked with red, white and green streamers, the colors of the Mexican flag. Midshipman Beale had a superficial face wound. The Californians had no fatalities and only a few injuries.

After the attack, the Kearney detachment buried their dead and limped several miles down the valley where the Californians, who had kept them under close observation, finally pinned them down on a boulder-studded rise. This terrain came to be known as Mule Hill, because after the fighting was over, Kearney's men camped for days there and were forced to eat some of their mounts or starve.

Kearney and the American forces were trapped with neither water nor supplies and the situation was desperate, when Midshipman Beale, Kit Carson and a now-nameless Indian volunteered to make an attempt to get through the California lines.

Later, in a commendatory speech before Congress, the eloquent Senator Thomas Hart Benton described the departure of the three men in these words: "The brief preparations for the forlorn hope were soon made, and brief they were . . . a rifle each, a blanket, a revolver, a sharp knife and no food; there was none in the camp. General Kearney invited Beale to come and sup with him. It was not the company of Anthony and Cleopatra, for when the camp starves, no general has a larder. It was meager enough. The General asked Beale what provisions he had to travel on and the answer was . . . nothing. The General called his servant to inquire what his tent afforded: a handful of flour was the answer. The General ordered it to be baked into a loaf and given to Beale. When the loaf was brought, the servant said that was the last, not only of bread, but everything — that he had nothing left for the General's breakfast. Beale directed the servant to carry back the loaf, saying he would provide for himself. He did provide for himself, but how? By going to the smoldering fire where the baggage had been burned in the morning and scraping from the ashes and embers the half-burned peas and grains of corn which the conflagration had spared, filling his pockets with the unwanted food. Carson and the Indian provided themselves with some mule beef."

The trek to San Diego (40 miles away) began badly for the three men and did not improve. They had to crawl barefoot across two miles of enemy line on ground bristling with cacti and thorny mesquite in order to reach the nearest cover. At times they had to pass so near the enemy sentries that they could smell cigar smoke and once Kit Carson whispered to his companions, "I've been in worse places than this and Providence has always seen me through." The young midshipman felt encouraged and in later life said that remembering these words in other crises always stood him in good stead.

The three messengers separated a few miles outside San Diego to triple their chances of completing their mission. After two nights and a day of the worst kind of hardship, they crawled to their destination. The Indian arrived first, Beale was second, and Carson was last.

Beale's hands and legs were badly scarred and he was nearly as thin as a skeleton so that his fellow officers from the Congress barely recognized him. He was able to gasp out an account of the desperate situation at General Kearney's camp, and collapsed into delirium. As he began to recover, one comfort he had was the knowledge that Kearney and his men had been rescued. Another was a gift of a pair of epaulettes and a sword from his shipmates inscribed, "Presented to Lieutenant Edward F. Beale, of the United States Navy, for his gallant conduct in the charge upon the Mexican forces at San Pasqual and San Bernadino and the carrying of intelligence to San Diego of the

position of General Kearney through the enemy's lines at great personal risk on the 6th and 7th of December 1846."

Beale was then selected to carry the dispatches to Washington, reporting the events in California. Two months later, February 9, 1847, still suffering from the effects of his first adventure, Beale left for the capital in the company of 12 soldiers and his friend, Kit Carson. The journey was a dangerous one, much of it through hostile Indian territory. They arrived in Washington in May 1847 with the welcome news that California had joined the Union. Carson and Beale were greeted with much acclaim.

He was reassigned to the Pacific Squadron, and in 1848 acting Lieutenant Beale was summoned by Commodore Thomas Catesby Jones to carry the first official news of the gold discoveries and a bag of the precious metal to Washington. He was ordered to get there before the Army courier, who was making the mission by ship. Beale chose to go overland through Mexico, the quickest but most difficult route. Dressed in Mexican frontier clothes, speaking fluent Spanish and with browned skin, he passed as a Mexican, attracting little attention. He sailed from Vera Cruz to Mobile, boarded a stage coach there and arrived in Washington in the record-breaking time of 42 days, beating the Army messenger by a full two months. His heroism at San Pasqual, as well as this winning of the gold-dust race, caused him to be lionized wherever he went. Beale appeared before the Senate to give a personal account of his expedition, and there was much Eastern enthusiasm about the gold discovery.

P.T. Barnum offered to buy the gold from Beale; Barnum wanted it for exhibition. But Beale declined and donated part of the gold to the U.S. Patent Office. Beale was allowed to keep the rest, and he had this made into a wedding ring for his fiancée, Mary E. Edwards of Chester, Pennsylvania. Beale made four more overland trips to California and back to Washington. In 1849, he married Mary Edwards in Chester, Pa. Although he was promoted to Lieutenant in 1850, Beale decided to resign from the Navy because he wanted to settle in California with his wife. His son, Truxton, was born in San Francisco in 1851. Beale realized the vast opportunities of this new territory, and within a year of his resignation he was operating all transportation from Sacramento and Marysville to the American Fork, carrying goods and equipment to the gold miners at \$1.00 a pound. His main business associates were his old commander, Commodore Stockton, and New Yorker William H. Aspinwall, promoter of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and the Panama Railroad, whom he had met when he carried the gold east. Beale's first year of operation netted the three men \$100,000, of which his \$13,000 share became the foundation for the fortune he acquired later on.

On a trip to Washington in 1852, Beale talked to his friends about his ideas on the government's conduct of affairs with the Indians. He had a deep concern for the condition of the Indians and what he considered the inhuman treatment they received from the white settlers. Much to his astonishment, his ideas were repeated at the White House and President Millard F. Fillmore appointed him the first Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California and Nevada. In a short while, Congress appropriated \$250,000 to help implement Beale's proposals for better protection and care of the Indians. Beale was directed to survey land for the Indian reservations. A detailed journal, "Beale Expedition of Central Route to Pacific Expedition of 1853," was published, having been kept by Gwinn Heap, one of the 12-member party.

During his term as Superintendent Beale showed himself to be a pioneer in Indian affairs. He had great understanding of the Indians under his care and his policy

became a model of its kind. He was so successful that hundreds of other Indians asked him to place them under his protection and allow them to live and work in his territory, which already contained 70,000 Indians. Beale attacked the Indian problem with characteristic energy and imagination. He was given powers that were described as "vice-regal in breadth and scope and finality." During his two-year tenure, he established reservations and won the confidence of the Indians and the hatred of corrupt Indian agents, who were resentful of his strict supervision. These dishonest agents sent a report to Washington saying Beale had used his job to line his own pockets. Due to Beale's accurate accounting methods, he was exonerated of the charge and his malicious accusers were removed in disgrace. It is interesting to note that when Beale met one of his accusers in a hotel lobby later, Beale, characteristically enough, punched him in the nose.

In 1856, Beale retired from his post. The Indians, finally driven to fury by the conduct of the settlers, began to rebel. Knowing Beale's influence upon the Indians and their regard for him, the Governor of California appointed him a Brigadier-General of the Militia. This gave him the rank to deal effectively with the Indians. Beale soon persuaded the rebellious chiefs to return to their reservations, and a bloody war was thereby prevented.

The next year, on a trip to Washington, General Beale sold Secretary of War Jefferson Davis on the idea of a Camel Corps for transport across the western wastelands. In 1857, President James Buchanan appointed Beale to the post of Superintendent of the Wagon Road Expedition — from Fort Defiance in the old territory of New Mexico to the Colorado River on the California border. General Beale used this as a trial walk for the awkward desert animals. In his report to the Secretary of War, May 12, 1858, Beale enthusiastically discussed the advantages of camels as pack animals: "My admiration for the camels increases daily with my experience of them. The harder the test they are put to, the more fully they seem to justify all that can be said of them. They pack water for others four days under a hot sun and never get a drop; they pack heavy burdens of corn and oats for months and never get a grain; and on the bitter greasewood and other worthless shrubs not only subsist but keep fat; withal, they are so perfectly docile and so admirably contented with whatever fate befalls them. No one could do justice to their merits or value in expeditions of this kind, and I look forward to the day when every mail route across the continent will be conducted and worked altogether with this economical and noble beast."

Seventy-seven camels were purchased in the Mediterranean countries and brought back to Texas. The expedition started with the specific mission of surveying a road along the 35th parallel and it turned out to be a 40-day trip. The caravan consisted of 56 men, 350 sheep, 8 mule-drawn covered wagons, 2 small box-type ambulances (1 painted red), and the camels, all wearing bells. Beale later described the spectacle in these words, "the loose animals, the wagons and teams, and then old Mohamet, with the long line of his grave and patient followers." One of the camel drivers was a Syrian named Jadji-Ali (of Hi-Jolly). He was a colorful character whose fame has been perpetuated throughout Arizona and who has become a desert legend for over a century. All along the 35th parallel that year, Beale's desert caravan was a most fascinating sight.

Army-trained mule drivers found it difficult to cope with the "desert ships." Some of them disappeared in the desert and others were hunted down by the Indians, who

preferred camel hump to buffalo meat. Around the start of the Civil War an Army board reviewed the camel situation and ended the experiment. Those remaining were sold at auction. Some were purchased by Beale for use on his ranch, Tejon Rancho, near the present city of Bakersfield.

Beale's wagon roads were among the first of the 1850's. Army posts were established after Beale's expeditions had opened the roads. Fort Mojave was one and was situated near Beale Crossing on the Colorado River, seven miles south of the town of Hardyville. There is a Beale monument in Kingman, Arizona which commemorates the camel expedition of 1857.

In the fall of 1858, Beale led another exploratory party, this time to prove that winter was no barrier to overland travel in the West. Crossing the plains from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Colorado River, he found that exposure to weather caused no illness and that the route was plentifully supplied with the three great requisites for the overland road — "wood, grass and water". Attached to his report was an estimate of the cost of constructing a railroad from Fort Smith to San Felipe, New Mexico — \$21,391,100, for he foresaw the replacement of wagon roads by the trains.

After Beale completed several more wagon road surveys, President Buchanan placed him in charge of the wagon road construction for the Central Plains. During 1859 and 1860, he worked on this government project. The road building was carried out quickly because the need for better communication between East and West was growing more important every day.

After his inauguration in 1861, President Lincoln appointed officials who could be counted upon to rally to the states of the Union. One of the first men Lincoln appointed was Beale as Surveyor-General of California and Nevada. Beale wanted active service and wrote to the President of his wishes, volunteering his services. Lincoln, however, decided that he would be more effective by remaining in California, and he thus denied Beale's request. So General Beale saw no active service in the Civil War because, as Scribner's Magazine (October 1911) expressed it, "because the providential President knew Beale's presence in that debatable state (California) would preserve it for the Union."

Beale stayed where he was needed, but first he wrote a letter to President Lincoln which reveals much about his character.

San Francisco, California
July 24, 1861

His Excellency President Lincoln:

A short time ago you did me the honor to appoint me to a most important and responsible position for which I beg you to accept my grateful acknowledgement. Under any other condition of public affairs you have left me nothing to be desired; but to the flag under which I have received honorable wounds, under which my father and my grandfather fought for the honor and glory of the country, I think I owe something more, in this hour of trial, than a mere performance of duty in a position of ease and quiet. To the government I owe early education and support, for I entered its service almost a child and feel toward it a filial affection and gratitude. All that I have, even my life, I owe to it, and it is a debt I am willing, gratefully and cheerfully, to discharge.

From fourteen to twenty-five, my life was passed at sea and for the past fifteen years principally on the Great Plains and in the Rocky Mountains. I served during the Mexican War, and at its close, I resigned and have been engaged in many expeditions

of some importance ever since. I know that I am resolute, patient and active and if I had not courage, my love of country would supply the want of it in such a time as this. Devoted to my country and owing it everything I have in the world, I write to offer my services to you in any capacity you may wish to use them, until the present rebellion is crushed out of the land. You cannot add to the distinction you have already conferred upon me by any appointment, for there is none within your gift more distinguished or more honorable; nor do I desire any change except that I may more efficiently serve the United States. In a word, I wish simply to offer my life for the flag.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

E.F. Beale

In May 1864 he terminated his work as Surveyor-General, being dissatisfied with the government's mining policy, which he thought was unjust to the miners. Beale stated his case saying that "I never desire again a place in public affairs."

Four years before becoming Surveyor-General, Beale in 1857 had assembled Tejon Rancho from land acquired from Spanish and Mexican absentee landowners. He had accumulated this land over the years and there he kept the remainder of the Camel Corps, which he appreciated more than Uncle Sam did. He often drove a sulky the hundred miles from his ranch to Los Angeles, drawn by tandem camels. He had Syrian names for the camels, a language he had mastered especially for the purpose.

Novelist Charles Nordhoff visited the Rancho in 1872 and wrote of Beale: "Our host was a sparkling combination of scholar, gentleman and Indian fighter, the companion and friend of Kit Carson in other days, the surveyor of trans-continental railways and wagon roads, and the owner today of what seems to be a most magnificent estate. The Rancho from which I write . . . lies at the junction of the Sierra Nevada with the Coast Range . . . You may ride for many miles on the country road upon his estate. It supports this year many sheep . . . and here I saw the operation of shearing; eight or nine weeks are required to shear the whole flock, as well as the various details of the management of a California sheep farm . . . And all this has been accomplished under the eye and by the careful and kindly management of the owner of the Tejon Rancho. It seemed a great thing for any man to achieve and certainly these people compared in every way favorably with a similar class I saw on the Tule River Indian Reservation, living at the expense of the Government — idle, gambling, lounging, evil-eyed, and good for nothing . . . General Beale's Indians have been raised to a far better condition by his own private efforts than the Reservation Indians after years of expensive support from the Government."

When the Civil War was over, Beale bought for his wife and two daughters, Mary and Emily, the old Decatur House in Washington, D.C. Decatur House had been designed by Benjamin F. Latrobe for the hero of the war against the Barbary pirates, Stephen Decatur. This house is still standing today and is the oldest house remaining on Lafayette Square, across from the White House. He now divided his time between Washington and his ranch in California.

During these postwar years General Beale made many speeches to groups of emancipated slaves. He seldom spoke at white gatherings, feeling that other speakers were always readily available to them; but he would drive many miles to encourage and advise the black people on their new-found freedom.

In 1876, some years after Ulysses S. Grant became President, he appointed Beale (whom he had known since the Mexican War) Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Pleni-

potentiary to Austria-Hungary. Shortly after Beale was appointed, the Austrians discovered this was the same man who was known to be a strong sympathizer of Juarez, who had executed Maximilian, the beloved younger brother of Emperor Franz Joseph.

The Emperor reluctantly accepted Beale because he was already in Vienna, but it was obvious that he did not intend to cultivate a friendship with a man whom he considered to be a friend of his brother's murderers. However, through the good offices of Count Gyula Andrassy, who was the chief foreign officer of Austria-Hungary, the breach was healed and very cordial relations followed. General Beale resigned after a year in the diplomatic service, but he left behind him friendly relations between the two nations. While in Vienna, it was said of him that he "would travel a thousand miles to avoid an idle function and twice that distance to visit an interesting Navy Yard or horse stud farm."

While Grant was President, he and Beale both like to raise horses and the two men spent some time on Beale's farm in Maryland called "Ash Hill." Beale had bought this country place in 1875 so that he could raise trotting horses. Grant's Arabian horses, "Leopard" and "Linden", which were presented to him by the Sultan of Turkey while Grant was traveling around the world, were shipped to Beale's farm in Maryland for safe-keeping. After a few years, Beale sold "Ash Hill", but this house is still standing today, and is now known as "Hitching Post Hill" in Hyattsville, Maryland.

When Grant left the White House, he began a series of extended trips around the world and, during this time and until his death, he carried on a correspondence with General Beale, his most trusted friend. When Grant returned from his world trip in 1878, the Beales held a reception in his honor at Decatur House.

In 1956, Mrs. Marie Beale, General Beale's daughter-in-law, bequeathed Decatur House to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Decatur House is open to the public and contains many of General Beale's mementoes, including the gold sword and epaulettes presented to him after the Battle of San Pasqual, as well as a dagger in sheath, with gold hilt on the handle, given to Beale by the State of California. There is also a state seal of rare California woods inlaid in the floor of the second floor. In addition, the Decatur House collection includes a large picture of General Beale in Mexican disguise as he raced to deliver the samples of California gold to Washington in 1849.

After Grant left the White House, President Chester A. Arthur considered appointing Beale as Secretary of the Navy. Beale had become alarmed at the way the Navy had been allowed to decline in strength after the Civil War, and he wrote frequent articles on the subject. The New England delegation, however, demanded the appointment of William E. Chandler as Secretary of the Navy, and President Arthur followed their advice, thereby eliminating Beale from consideration.

Beale suffered no declining years; after a short illness General Beale died in Decatur House on April 22, 1893. According to an obituary, his "disease was jaundice, but there may have been a more violent affliction of the liver." The services were held in Decatur House, in accordance with Beale's request and were reported by the Washington Post, to be . . . "of the simplest character but very impressive." There were many members of the Army and Navy, some of them old fellow officers, among them Mr. William Colligan who had served with Beale on the Congress. The diplomatic corps was also represented, and many more who were prominent in the official life of the city.

The procession was led by the honorary pallbearers who were: Vice-President Levi P.

Morton, Supreme Court Justice Stephen Field, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Judge Bancroft Davis, and Admiral Daniel Ammen. The final interment was made in Chester, Pennsylvania, which was the place named by General Beale before his death.

Truxton Beale, General Beale's son, inherited the Tejon ranch in California in 1902, and lived there for several years. During this period he met Marie Chase Oge, a California native, and they were married a short time later. They spent most of their time thereafter in Washington, D.C. at Decatur House, so they eventually sold the California ranch.

General Beale must have enjoyed reading this spirited account of his career, which appeared in the *San Francisco News Letter* some years before his death:

"The news of Ned Beale's appointment to be Minister to Austria, succeeding Mr. John Jay, is as refreshing as a shower of rain — for if ever there was a typical and representative Californian, Ned Beale is he. Setting out in life a Lieutenant in the Navy, he had a chance to fight in the territorial days and he fought like the devil. Appointed to look after the Arizona Indians at a time when Arizona Indians were at their best and meanest, he took over and then made friends with them — and these were the days when Indians were Indians and their only use for a commissioner was to scalp him on sight. In his administration, Beale took bigger risks, showed more endurance, underwent more trying hardships than any other man whether in the Army or out of it. He out-scouted any scout and out-rode any mail rider we had in the service. He showed himself an iron man put up with steel springs and whalebone, and all the while, be it noted, he was only a youngster. Finally the war came and Beale went Union and got thereby the Surveyorship-Generalship of California. Ned Beale was an opportunist who was born with a head on his shoulders and he never hid it away in his trunk."

Beale was a fighting man who determined, when a young man, to live up to the challenges of his father and grandfather, both distinguished in battle. He more than repaid the benefits he received from his country and left a colorful legacy — the winning of California — the many daring overland trips from the West to the East — his exploration of the first wagon roads through the Southwest — his concern and kind understanding of the Indians — his monuments in California and Arizona — his Decatur House in Washington, D.C. Called the patron on this California ranch, Beale was a good friend to those in both the highest and lowest positions, a straight-shooting, hard fighting, life-loving man who walked with kings and commoners alike. He was an outstanding American whose deeds were colorful and heroic — the last of the continental pathfinders, and a pioneer in uniting the States from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

APPENDIX — DOCUMENTS

Battle of San Pasqual from "Edward Fitzgerald Beale" by Stephen Bonsal, 1912
"He Won the Gold Dust Derby" Andrew Hamilton, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Sept. 1949
Decatur House and Its Inhabitants, by Marie Beale, 1954
Decatur House, the Illustrated Story of the Property, Publication #123
Beale and Grant Correspondence, Decatur House and Library of Congress
Beale Exploration of Central Route to Pacific, Expedition of 1853, by Gwinn Harris Heap
The Story of my Life, by John C. Fremont
The El Dorado Trail, The Story of the Gold Rush Route across Mexico,
by Gerol Egan, 1970
Beale's Commission as Superintendent in California signed by President Fillmore, 1852,
National Archives
Arizona Highways Magazine, Phoenix, Arizona (Centennial Edition 1963)
U.S. Naval Proceedings Institute, Comd. John O. Stull

This historical biography is in the records of the Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Md.